



## Expanding Your Market



Americans with Disabilities Act  
**ADA Business Connection**

The U.S. Department of Justice believes that compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) makes good business sense. Businesses can tap into a huge and growing market of people with disabilities, and customers with disabilities can gain access to services, products, and employment opportunities. This census and financial information, gathered from a number of sources, illustrates how businesses can benefit by welcoming customers with disabilities.

## Customers with Disabilities Mean Business

### Facts about Americans with Disabilities

The 2000 U.S. Census found that there are more than 50 million Americans with disabilities. Almost one in five people in this country are potential customers for businesses that are accessible to people with disabilities. (11)

Millions of people with disabilities regularly travel, shop, and eat out with family and friends. A 1990 study by the U.S. Department of Education found that 20.3 million families in the U.S. have at least one member with a disability. (12)

The 2000 U.S. Census reported that almost 42% of older adults (65+ years) have one or more disabilities. (11) The Administration on Aging projects that by 2030 there will be more than 69 million people age 65 and older, making up approximately 20% of the total U.S. population. (1)

The percentage of people with disabilities is larger than any single ethnic, racial, or cultural group in the U.S. At 19.3%, the number of people with disabilities exceeds the next largest group -- Hispanic people (14.9%) -- by a fairly wide margin. (6)

The 2000 U.S. Census stated that at least 16% of the people in each of the Census' defined ethnic, racial, and cultural groups self-identified as having disabilities. For example: 24.3% of both African Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives, 20.9% of Hispanics/Latinos, 18.5% of Whites, and 16.6% of Asians reported disabilities. (11)

### Information about the ADA and Business

For more information about how businesses can comply with the ADA and reach this nearly untapped market of people with disabilities, visit the U.S. Department of Justice's ADA Business Connection site at **[www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)**. Or, call the toll-free ADA Information Line:

800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY)

National Captioning Institute research found that 66% of viewers of captioned TV are more likely to buy a product that has a captioned commercial; 53% will actively seek out products advertised with captions; and, 35% will switch to brands that use captioned ads. (7)



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## Spending Power of Americans with Disabilities

The large and growing market of people with disabilities has \$175 billion in discretionary spending, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. (12) \$175 billion is almost two times the spending power of teens and more than 17 times the spending power of tweens (8-12 year-olds), two demographics sought after by businesses. (9,2)

An Open Doors Organization study estimated in 2003 that diners with disabilities would spend \$35 billion in restaurants that year. The study found that more than 75% of people with disabilities eat out at restaurants at least once a week. (8)

The New York Times reported that spending by travelers with disabilities exceeds \$13.6 billion annually. (5)

AARP says that 4 million Americans turn 50 each year and that people age 50 and older spent nearly \$400 billion in 2003. (4) At age 50, adults are likely to experience age-related physical changes that may affect hearing, vision, cognition, and mobility. While they may not think of themselves as having disabilities, people in this age group often seek out businesses that accommodate those changes by offering better lighting, less ambient noise, and fewer stairs.

## People with Disabilities Globally

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 600 million people with disabilities around the world. (13) Examples of the global spending power of people with disabilities include:

- United Kingdom: The Institute of Employment Studies reported in that in 1999, Britons with disabilities had a disposable income total of £50 billion. (3)
- Australia: The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated that Australians with disabilities have a discretionary income of at least AUS \$26 billion. (3)
- Canada: The Conference Board of Canada reported in 2001 that the combined annual disposable income of working-aged Canadians with disabilities was CAN \$25 billion. (10)

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Duplication of this document is encouraged.

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